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First name: Sean
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Organization:
Title:
Comments: My name is Sean Groenstein and I have serious concerns regarding the proposed Midas Gold mining project outside of Yellow Pine Idaho. As an avid whitewater kayaker, the South Fork of the Salmon River and its tributary the East Fork hold a special place in my heart ever since I first paddled them. Not only do they contain some of the best multi-day whitewater runs in the lower 48, but they also are the embodiment of the rugged beauty of Idaho. While I understand the United State's necessity for precious metals such as gold, the Frank Church Wilderness area is worth far more than the monetary resources which can be mined within it. Under the guise of "Restoring the Site" as Midas claims through their propaganda, they have been allowed to go farther then previous proposed plans but in reality they are just another mining company.Instead of caring about what this place means to Idaho and mining elsewhere, Midas Gold is willing to overlook the following environmental issues with their proposed project which I have concerns about.

1. Any mercury or pollution from other toxic materials in the river will flow downstream affecting many miles of river and the native fish and animal populations that frequent them, including but not limited to Chinook Salmon and Bull Trout.

2. Wilderness access through the Mine Area, especially where part of the project encroaches on the East Fork of the South Fork Salmon, an extremely popular whitewater run.

3. The mine will dump approximately 100 million tons of mining waste on public lands, which not only would affect animal habitat but also have visibility impacts to the once pristine Frank Church wilderness area.

Long ago the South Fork of the Salmon should have been placed under the protection of the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act as many neighboring rivers have been, unfortunately because it has not received this status, this river has come under threat from mining projects such as the one proposed. I'm begging you to stop this project in its tracks and save this amazing river nestled at Idaho's heart.

Sincerely,

Sean Groenstein

ATTACHMENTS: I've attached several photos from my last trip down the South Fork of the Salmon as a testament to how special these rivers are.

Attachment: Photograhs

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